SECTION I. PERSONAL STATUS

CHAPTER I. THE FAMILY AND THE CLAN

1. Generalities

596 The family sensu stricto (rugo) (1) is more inclusive than in

●[196] 1. The rugo is the enclosure in which are the hut, the granaries, and the stables. By extension, this word designates the family in the strict sense of the word. In the plural: ingo.

our countries. It includes the father; his wives and their children, whether married or not; the father's brothers; and their wives and [567] children. Formerly, the slaves taken in war (abanyagano) (2) were

2. Cf. also Marriage, p. 15; Birth and Filiation, p. 29; Government and Administration, Nationality, p. 70; Social Classes, p. 91; Right of War, p. 92.

also part of it.

[566] The Bahutu, serfs of the Batutsi, have their own rugo. The Ruanda family is of the patriarchal type. Filiation counts in the [611] paternal line (3); the child does not necessarily take the name of his

3. The children are nevertheless considered, in a way, as belonging to both father's family and the mother's. The Banyarwanda say: Umuntu akomoka iwabo wase nanyina, that is to say, "the man proceeds from both (families), his father's and his mother's."

596 591 father (4); paternal authority is exercised by the father, and the wife

4. This was even rare before European penetration.

4: Maquet E-5 (1950-1951) 1954 FO42 Rundi FO42

Man and the Non-material World

Imana, the Creator

Imana, the creator, is a person. He is conceived as an intelligence, a will, an emotivity. He is extremely powerful: 'the plant protected by *Imana* is never hurt by wind', '*Imana* has very long arms', '*Imana* goes above any shield'. He is non-material. His action influences the whole world; but Ruanda is his home where he comes to spend the night. He is always invoked as 'God of Ruanda' (*Imana y'i Ruanda*).

Imana is essentially good: 'your enemy is digging a pitfall for you, *Imana* prepares your exit', '*Imana* gives, he does not sell'. This is why he takes care of men and why there is no cult in his honour. He is so good, I have been told, that he does not require any offering.

There is a special creative act of *Imana* at the beginning of each person's life. Impregnation in itself would not be sufficient to produce a new human being. This is why the young wife, at evening, leaves a few drops of water in a jar. *Imana*, as a potter, needs some water to shape the clay into a child in her womb. Then, after birth, *Imana* decides what life is to be for that individual: happy or unhappy. If, later on, a man is miserable, poverty-stricken, in bad health, it is said that he was created by *Ruremakwaci*. This way of speaking has led some observers to understand that besides *Imana*, there was another creator, perhaps subordinate, perhaps an evil spirit. As a matter of fact, *Ruremakwaci* is the name given to *Imana* when he does not create very successfully, when 'he is tired', or, for some inscrutable reason, decides that a certain destiny will be unhappy. This is consistent with the Ruanda linguistic habit of assigning different names to one cause according to its different effects.

Imana's influence is thought to be always beneficial for human beings. It happens very often that obstacles are placed in the way of his action by malevolent agencies of the invisible world, but from him only good things come. This is not completely consistent with the belief in an unfortunate predestination by *Imana*. It should be noted, first, that the theory of predestination has not a very deep impact on the attitude of Banyarwanda. A person who thinks himself unhappy, and might thus suspect that he has been predestined to a miserable life, does not seem to be submerged by a feeling of doom. Unless he is brought to despair by a situation from which there is no escape, he will go on living and trying to improve his condition. Secondly, this inconsistency will be better understood if we consider the attitude of Banyarwanda towards the king (the *Mwami*) in similar circumstances. The *Mwami*, the supreme authority is good, yet he may be harmful and cruel to some of his subjects. As his power is absolute, as he is magically identified with Ruanda itself, he may never be criticized. Thus the victims of some arbitrary royal decision, and their friends, go on saying that the king is good but that his favourite counsellor is very bad and is responsible for what they suffer. As might be expected, in Ruanda God is conceived